

Interview Opportunities

The following individuals provided their knowledge and expertise on materials and content related to American Girl's 2009 Girl of the Year campaign to help girls stand up against bullying. To arrange an interview, please contact Stephanie Spanos at stephanie.spanos@americangirl.com.



Patti Criswell, author of *Stand Up for Yourself & Your Friends*

Patti Criswell is a clinical social worker and has been in private practice for fifteen years. She specializes in working with girls and young women, and their families. She is the award-winning author of several American Girl titles, including *A Smart Girls Guide to Friendship Troubles*, *Friends: Making Them and Keeping Them*, and the newly published *Stand Up for Yourself & Your Friends: Dealing with Bullies and Bossiness, and Finding a Better Way*. Patti has also been a consultant to the American Girl company for over ten years. She is an adjunct professor of Social Work at Western Michigan University. Patti regularly writes and speaks nationally on the topics of girl aggression and body image. She lives near Kalamazoo, Michigan, with her husband Brian, and her two children, Natalie and Jeff.



Dr. Charisse Nixon, author of *Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying*

Dr. Nixon is the co-author of *Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying*, and the author of numerous scholarly journal articles addressing prevention and intervention efforts in the realm of relational aggression. She is an assistant professor of developmental psychology at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College and the director of research & evaluation for The Ophelia Project. Dr. Nixon's research focuses on: the role of normative beliefs in RA, the construct of empathy with respect to RA, the exploration of cognitive and emotional correlates as they relate to RA, and examining children's cognitive and emotional coping strategies as a result of peer aggression.



Mary Baird, President & CEO of The Ophelia Project

Mary Baird has been involved with the Ophelia Project since its inception in 1997. Baird received her master's degree in health education and remains committed to promoting the health and well-being of children and adults across the country. With nearly 30 years experience in health care, education and program development, she is actively involved in all aspects of The Ophelia Project service delivery, including research, trainings and new initiatives.



Mary Casanova, author of *Chrissa* and *Chrissa Stands Strong*

Mary Casanova is an award-winning children's author of more than 20 books, including picture books and novels. In writing the *Chrissa* books, Mary drew on both her own and her daughter's experiences of bullying. "No child grows up without either experiencing or witnessing bullying, and I was no exception," she explains. "I wish I'd known as a child and as a parent what I know now, that bullying exists *because we tolerate it*. My hope is that readers will relate to Chrissa and her struggles, and will take away insights on how to deal with bullying in their own lives."

In addition to writing, Casanova speaks at hundreds of schools and conferences each year.